

Delaware Secretary Urges Farms to Participate in USDA Agricultural Labor Survey

DOVER, Del. (September 15, 2021) – Secretary of Agriculture Michael T. Scuse urges producers across Delaware to participate in USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) upcoming Agricultural Labor Survey scheduled for release in mid-October. The survey will collect information about hired labor from nearly 90 Delaware farmers.

"Over the past year, we have seen a major change in labor policies that will impact agricultural producers who hire farm labor," said ***Secretary of Agriculture Michael T. Scuse***. "I realize that this is a hectic time for our farmers, but the best way for farmers to be heard and shape future policy is to participate in these surveys."

USDA and the U.S. Department of Labor use statistics gathered in the Agricultural Labor Survey to establish minimum wage rates for agricultural workers, administer farm labor recruitment and placement service programs, and assist legislators in determining labor policies.

The survey asks participants to answer various questions about hired farm labor on their operations, including the total number of hired farmworkers, the total hours worked, and total base and gross wages paid for the weeks of July 11-17 and October 10-16. To save time and money for producers, participants can securely respond to the survey at agcounts.usda.gov instead of mailing the forms back.

"By asking about two separate time periods each time we collect data during the year, we can publish quarterly data

and capture seasonal variation,” said King Whetstone, Director of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Northeastern Regional Field Office. “This approach reduces the number of times we survey farm businesses while ensuring that accurate and timely data are available.”

As with all NASS surveys, the results of this survey will be available in aggregate form, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified. NASS will compile, analyze, and publish survey results from more than 2,000 farmers and ranchers across the 11-state Northeastern region in the November 24 Farm Labor report.

All previous Farm Labor publications are available online at <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/concern/publications/x920fw89s>. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Northeastern Regional Field Office at 1-800-498-1518.

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